

The Sumter Little Theatre

Presents



Director

Katie Damron

Musical Director

Kipper Ackerman

Originally Produced by

Gene Wolsk

**Musical Continuity Supervision
and Arrangement by**

James Raitt

Choreographer

Jane Collins

**Written and Originally Directed and
Choreographed by**

Stuart Ross

September 5-8 and 12-15, 2002

"Forever Plaid" is produced through special arrangement
with MTI, Music Theatre International.

Author's Note...

When most of us think of the 1950s, we think of rock 'n' roll, greasers, hot rods, Elvis, Annette, Fabian, D.A., haircuts and teenage rebellion. But there was a flip side to this era-the side of harmony, innocence and sincerity of dreams. It is the side that's been lost in the shuffle of progress. It was a time when most parents and kids listened and danced to the same music; when families partook of the ritual of gathering in front of the TV to watch their favorite variety shows, like the Ed Sullivan Show or the Perry Como Show. It was a time when every family worked to fulfill the American Dream.

It was a period when four-part guy groups harmonized their way across the airwaves, jukeboxes and hi-fis of the country. Throughout the land they would stand at a quartet of microphones, crooning a multitude of chaperoned prom-goers into dreamy romance.

They wore dinner jackets and bow ties (or perhaps cardigans and white bucks). Each move was drilled to precision. Each vocal arrangement soared to stratospheric heights of harmony. This sound crested right before rock 'n' roll stole the heartbeat of music across the globe.

During this time, guys across the country banded together to sing in the basement for fun. If things worked out they might be hired to sing at a wedding, conventions, proms and country club socials. Inspired by the success of the recording stars, they made plans to zoom into careers of fame and fortune. But the musical taste of the U.S.A. was changing, and the country would not stop to listen to their dreams.

This is the story of such a group-FOREVER PLAID.

Once upon a time, there were four guys (Sparky, Smudge, Jinx and Frankie) who loved to sing. They all met in high school, when they joined the audiovisual club (1956). Discovering they shared an affection for music and entertaining, they got together and dreamed of becoming like their idols-The Four Aces, The Four Lads, The Four Freshman, The Hi-Los and The Crew Cuts. They rehearsed in the basement of Smudge's family's plumbing supply company. It was here they became Forever Plaid-a name that connects the continuation of traditional values of family, home and harmony. Although rock 'n' roll was racing down the fast lane like a candy apple "vette", they believed in their music. As their sound developed, they sang at family gatherings, fund-rasiers, and eventually graduated to supermarket openings and proms. They had little time for romance or leisure for they supported their fantasy by holding down day jobs-Frankie was in dental supplies, Smudge was in bathroom fixtures. Sparky was in better dresses. They devoted themselves to singing at nights and on weekends. Then, finally, they landed their first big gig at the Airport Hilton cocktail bar-The Fusel Lounge.

February 9, 1964-En route to pick up their custom-made plaid tuxedos, they were slammed broadside by a school bus filled with eager Catholic teens. The teens were on their way to witness the Beatles make their U.S. television debut on the Ed Sullivan show and miraculously escaped uninjured. The members of Forever Plaid were killed instantly. It is at that moment, when their careers and lives ended, that the story of **FOREVER PLAID** begins.

Through the Power of Harmony and the Expanding Holes in the Ozone Layer, in conjunction with the positions of the planets and all the astrotechnical stuff, they are allowed to come back and perform the show they never got to do in life.

And having completed their Mission of Harmony, our men in plaid must return to the cosmos. Although they may be gone, through this production their dreams live on forever.

Cast

Frankie	Ted Fienning
Smudge	Scott McLendon
Sparky	Kelly Melton
Jinx	Russell Anderson

Orchestra

Piano/Musical Director	Kipper Ackerman
Percussion	Jay Shealy
Bass	Ed Roberts

Musical Numbers

1. Three Coins In the Fountain
2. Gotta Be This Or That/Undecided
3. Moments to Remember
4. Crazy 'Bout You Baby
5. No Not Much
6. Perfidia
7. Cry
8. Sixteen Tons/Chain Gang
9. The Catering Drill/She Loves You
10. The Golden Cardigan
11. Caribbean Plaid/Matilda
12. Heart and Soul
13. Lady of Spain
14. Scotland The Brave
15. Shangri-La/Rags to Riches
16. Love is a Many Splendored Things

Production Staff

Director	Katie Damron
Musical Director	Kipper Ackerman
Choreographer	Jane Collins
Stage Manager	Carmela Bryan
Costumes	Marge Cowles, Julia Kyger, Shannon Flaherty
Technical Director	Michael Duffy
Lighting Designer	Tom Soltau
Set Construction/Scene Painting	Michael Duffy
Properties	Sylvia Pickell
Box Office	Junior Welfare League and Volunteers

The Cast

Ted Fienning (Frankie) Living at home for a time has its perks, especially the opportunity to return to SLT! As the only unmarried member of the cast, the patience (and cookies) provided by Katie, Jane, Kipper and the other Plaid's supportive wives have made rehearsing a real treat. Thanks also to my folks and my brother for a wonderful summer.

Scott McLendon (Smudge) Scott is a Network Administrator for a landscape architecture firm in Hilton Head. This is his first theatre production since playing a street urchin in "Scrooge" in the 5TH grade, although he has graced many Karaoke stages in the U.S. and abroad.

Kelly Melton (Sparky) Sumter Little Theatre audiences will remember Kelly's performances in "Greater Tuna" and "A Tuna Christmas." He also appeared in "Little Murders." Kelly is a drama teacher at Sumter High School.


Russell Anderson (Jinx) A versatile singer and dancer, Russell toured with The Robert Ivey Ballet and performed at the Grand Old Opry with Porter Wagoner. His stage credits include Baby John in "West Side Story" and Barnaby Tucker in "Hello Dolly."

Kipper Ackerman (Musical Director) Kipper is new to the Sumter Little Theatre with "Forever Plaid." Ackerman, who is from Dalzell, SC graduated from Presbyterian College with a B.S. in Music Education and began her work on a Master of Music Education at Winthrop University. She returned home and now lives in Sumter with her husband Curt, and her three-year old daughter, Eliza. Ackerman has really enjoyed working with the Theatre and is looking forward to doing this again...a little later.

Jane Collins (Choreographer) A retired English teacher, Jane began choreographing musicals at SLT in 1971 with our production of "Kiss Me Kate." Since that time, she has choreographed musicals for the U.S. Army and Air Force. She choreographed a touring production of "The Fantasticks" in Florida. Jane is most proud of her work as a modern dance instructor for School District #17's Talented and Gifted Program.

Jay Shealy (Percussion) Jay's first appearance on the SLT stage was as Piglet in the production of "Winnie-the-Pooh" a few years back. Since that time, Jay has provided a steady beat for several SLT musicals including the popular "Nunsense" and "Nunsense II: The Second Coming" and the children's production, "Just So."

Ed Roberts (Bass) Ed is employed at Sesquicentennial State Park in Columbia. He has appeared in our production of "Pump Boys and Dinettes," and was in the orchestra for "Annie," "Hello Dolly," and "Little Mary Sunshine." He is a member of the Sumter Community Concert Band and the Swan Lake Presbyterian Church Choir.



**Coming Soon
to SLT!**

"Wait Until Dark"

October 24-27 and 31- November 3, 2002

**"The Best
Christmas Pageant Ever"**

December 5-8 and 12-15, 2002

Special Thanks
Florence Little Theatre
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